

Message Text

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AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

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DEPT PASS AMBASSADOR KEATING

E. O. 11652: N/A

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SUBJ: RABIN RADIO INTERVIEW ON MIDDLE EAST PEACE EFFORTS

1. BEGIN SUMMARY. IN RADIO INTERVIEW APRIL 2 PM RABIN PLACED ONUS FOR SUSPENSION OF EGYPTIAN- ISRAELI NEGOTIATIONS ON EGYPT AND SAW NO NEED FOR ISRAEL TO MAKE ANY CHANGES IN ITS NEGOTIATING POSITIONS. HE BELIEVED U.S.-ISRAEL RELATIONS FIRM ENOUGH TO WITHSTAND PRESENT DIFFICULTIES. IF GENEVA CONFERENCE IS TO SUCCEED, IT SHOULD BE CONDUCTED WITHIN FRAMEWORK OF BILATERAL NEGOTIATIONS AND AGREEMENTS. END SUMMARY.

2. FOLLOWING ARE HIGHLIGHTS OF INTERVIEW WITH PM RABIN OVER IDF BRACASTING STATION APRIL 2, BASED ON SUMMARY IN OFFICIAL PRESS BULLETIN AND JERUSALEM POST (FULL TEXT CARRIED FBIS TEL AVIV 02 1455Z):

3. BEGIN TEXT: SUSPENSION OF ISRAELI-EGYPTIAN NEGOTIATIONS: RABIN STRESSED THAT ISRAEL WENT OUT OF ITS WAY IN PROPOSING UNCLASSIFIED

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A FLEXIBLE POSITION TO EGYPT, EXPRESSED IN A VARIETY OF

PROPOSALS--SEPARATE ISRAELI-EGYPTIAN PEACE TREATY; BROAD, INTERIM SETTLEMENT; AND MORE LIMITED, INTERIM SETTLEMENT. SUSPENSION OF TALKS WAS NOT ISRAELI DECISION. ALL THREE PROPOSALS SUBMITTED BY ISRAEL WERE REJECTED BY EGYPT. RABIN SAID THAT" THE FACT THAT EGYPT WOULD ON NO ACCOUNT ACCEPT THE ISRELI PROPOSALS MUST NOT BE ALLOWEDTO BRING ABOUT A CHANGE IN THE ISRAELI POSITION."

4. POLICIES ON FURTHER STEPS:

RABIN NOTED THAT EGYPTIAN POLICY IS TO KEEP OPEN, AT LEAST AT THIS STAGE, THREE OPTIONS: WAR, INTERIM AGREEMENT, ANDRESUMPTION OF GENEVA CONFERENCE. ISRAEL IS MAINTAINING HER POSITION ON PROGRESS TOWARDS PEACE BY WAY OF AN OVERALL AGREEMENT OR AN INTERIM AGREEMENT WITH EGYPT. ISRAEL MUST FIRST PRESENT DIRECTIONS IN WHICH IT IS PREPARED TO GO AND SEE WHAT RESPONSES ITS PROPOSALS EVOKE. HASTE, HE THOUGH, MIGHT BE CONSTRUED AS EXPRESSION OF WEAKNESS.

5. PENING OF CANAL:

RABIN SAID THE OPENING OF CANAL WOULD BE " FIRST AND FOREMOST" IN INTEREST OF EGYPT BECAUSE OF ITS FINANCIAL NEEDS,AND THAT ANY ATTEMPT TO PRESENT OPENING OF CANAL AS GESTURE TOWARDISRAEL IS MISTAKEN.

6. UNEF:

RABIN REGARDED EGYPT AS " BOUND TO MAINTAIN HER READINESS TO CONTINUE EXISTENCE OF THE UNEF," WHICH IS PART OF DISENGAGEMENT AGREEMENT, AND " ANY ATTEMPT TO CANCEL IT, OR NOT TO EXTEND IT FOR THE ACCEPTED PERIOD OF TIME IS....A NEGATIVE INDICATION FOR THE DISENGAGEMENT AGREEMENT.

7. US-ISRAEL RELATIONS:

RABIN NOTED THAT THERE HAVE BEEN DIFFERENCES OF OPINION BETWEEN US AND ISRAELIN THE PAST, AND HE BELIEVED THAT " THE BASIS OF FRIENDSHIP, UNDERSTANDING AND COMMON INTERESTS OF THE US AND ISRAEL REMAINS FIRM, AND WILL MAKE IT POSSIBLE TO COME THROUGH THE PRESENT PERIOD AND THE DIFFERENCES OF OPINION WHICH PERHAPS EXIST AT THIS TIME." IT WOULD BE A UNCLASSIFIED

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MISTAKE, SAID RABIN, TO DRAW ANY PARALLELS BETWEEN US ATTITUDES TOWARD SOUTH EAST ASIA AND ISRAEL. WITH RESPECT TO CONGRESS, HE SAID HE FOUND " IT DIFFICULT...TO ASSUME THAT CONGRESS WOULD WITHHOLD AID FROM ISRAEL. ON THE MEETING OF SENATOR MCGOVERN WITH ARAFAT, RABIN SAID HE DID NOT CONSIDER STAND OF ONE SENATOR " AS REFLECTING TRENDS IN SENATE ITSELF."

8. ADVANCE PREPARATION FOR GENEVA CONFERENCE:

RABIN DESCRIBED TWO LEVELS OF ADVANCE PREPARATIONS FOR A GENEVA CONFERENCE IF IT IS TO CONTRIBUTE TO PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST. CONFERENCE SHOULD BE CONDUCTED INFRAMWORK OF BILATERAL CONTACTS BETWEEN ISRAEL AND EACH OF HER NEIGHBORS, AS PROBLEMS WITH EACH ARE DIFFERENT. PEACE AGREEMENTS OR TREATIES MUST BE BILATERAL, OTHERWISE POLITICAL SETTLEMENT IS MEANINGLESS. SECOND LEVEL INVOLVES NECESSITY FOR COORDINATING POSITIONS AS FAR AS POSSIBLE BETWEEN US AND ISRAEL IN ORDER TO COUNTER THE HOSTILE POSITION WHICH THE SOVIET UNION WILL UNDOUBTEDLY TAKE. END TEXT.

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